THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF INDUSTRY,

A SERMON,

Preached before his Grace, FREDERICK, Archbiſhop of CANTERBURY, the 4th of JULY, 1773,

In the PARISH CHURCH of SHIPLAKE, in OXFORDSHIRE.

By JAMES GRANGER, VICAR.

Labor ipſe Voluptas:
Voluptas ipſa Labor.

LONDON:
Printed for the AUTHOR; and ſold by T. DAVIES, in Ruſſel-Street, Covent-Garden.

M.DCC.LXXIII.

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TO THE

INHABITANTS

OF THE

PARISH of SHIPLAKE,

who neglect the Service of the Church,

and ſpend the Sabbath

in the worſt kind of *Idleneſs*,

this plain SERMON

which they never heard,

and probably will never read,

is inſcribed, by

their ſincere well-wiſher,

and faithful Miniſter,

JAMES GRANGER.

SERMON.

ROMANS xii. 11.

Not Slothful in Buſineſs.

THESE are the words of the moſt laborious as well as the moſt eminent of our bleſſed Saviour's Apoſtles; whoſe active ſpirit carried him through all the difficulties, ſupported him under all the miſeries, and armed him with courage and reſolution amidſt all the

dangers which attended that great and adventurous taſk he had taken upon him, to bear Chriſt's name before the Gentiles, and to plant a religion which muſt neceſſarily meet with the ſtrongeſt oppoſition from the heathen world. A religion which oppoſed their worſhip, in the practice of which they had continued for a long ſucceſſion of ages; thwarted their darling paſſions, in preaching the unheard of virtues of humility, meekneſs, and mortification; denied plurality of Gods; and aſſerted the reſurrection; doctrines which baffled their reaſon, and confounded all their philoſophy.

Yet ſuch was the induſtry of this great apoſtle, and ſo well did the work of the Lord proſper in his hands, that in ſpite of all the prejudice of education, the depravity of human nature, the force of miſguided reaſon, and the conſtant oppoſition of malicious enemies and perſecutors, he had the happineſs to enjoy the glorious effects of his labours, in ſeeing the goſpel ſpread over a

great

great part of the Heathen world. Having exerciſed his apoſtolical office among the Romans, he, purſuant to the duty of his calling, ſends them an epiſtle full of *inſtructions* relative to their religious and moral conduct; among which is the very important precept which I have choſen for my text.

I ſhall, in diſcourſing on the words, conſider,

I. The nature and reaſonableneſs of induſtry.

II. The extent of it, as it regards all orders and degrees of men: and then conclude with ſome ſuitable reflections.

I. I am to ſhew the nature and reaſonableneſs of induſtry.

This virtue conſiſts in the right and proper application of thoſe powers of body and mind which God has beſtowed upon us, to promote our own good, or that of the ſociety of which we are members.

It was a principle of induſtry, as well as benevolence, that originally brought mankind into communities, and prompted them to regulate and ſecure themſelves by laws. To this we owe the origin of thoſe occupations and callings which are neceſſary to the ſupport, ornament, and defence of the commonwealth. We may conſider induſtry as the bond of all political union; as without it muſt follow a total diſſolution of all order and government. It is to this we owe the improvement of thoſe talents in which the perfection of human nature conſiſts; as it quickens our apprehenſion, ſtrengthens our reaſon, and ripens our judgment. Hence ariſes that harmony which we ſee in well governed ſtates, and all the advantages in morals, arts, and learning, which we have over uncivilized and barbarous nations. Nothing but want, diſorder, and confuſion, would reign in the world without it: inſecurity of property, rapine, and violence, muſt neceſſarily enſue from the neglect of it; and mankind, like brutes, would prey upon and deſtroy one another.

another. We may regard a ſtate or common-wealth, as one great machine, and all the uſeful members of it as the ſeveral ſprings from which it derives its motion; ſome having greater, and others leſs operations; but all muſt act together in order to the uniform and juſt movement of the whole; and the leaſt of theſe ſprings may, in its proper office, be as uſeful as the greateſt.

In a well ordered government, the ſeveral degrees and ſubordinations of men one to another, are eſſential to the regulation of the whole ſyſtem. The huſbandman, the builder, the artiſan, and the ſcholar, are all neceſſary in their different employments; and are under an obligation to promote the general good, by being induſtrious in their various occupations. That man ought to be diſcountenanced and deteſted, as a pernicious member of the community, who would enjoy the fruits of others induſtry without any of his own: It is a breach of the law of nature, which obliges us to purchaſe all the neceſſaries, as well as the conveniencies

cies and ornaments of life, at the expence of labour.

It appears by the make of our bodies, that they were deſigned for employment; and the mind, which is ever in motion, ſufficiently ſhews the intention of its creator.

How very contemptible then is the life of a ſluggard; who, when every inſect is employed, when all nature is in perpetual activity, is doing nothing!

We may learn to be induſtrious from almoſt every thing around us. If we turn our eyes up to the heavens, we ſee the ſun moving on, from day to day, in an uninterrupted courſe: the winds, the air, the clouds, are perpetually in motion *. If we look down

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* As the human ſoul, the nobleſt and moſt eſtimable part of the creation, appears to be an active and thoughtful principle, conſtantly in motion, it is contrary to the analogy of nature, that it ſhould, when ſeparated

down upon the earth, we muſt every where ſee the marks of induſtry. Every field ſhews the toil of the huſbandman; every building is the effect of art and labour.

Thus every thing that we behold is a ſtanding reproach to the idle and indolent, and cries aloud for induſtry. That alone is the mother of every excellence which we can attain, and the price of whatever is uſeful, eminent, or laudable, among men. It is this which ſets us more above one another than nature does; and thoſe qualifications which are the ornaments of either ſex, are the productions of induſtrious application.

Wonderful is the effect of induſtry, in ſupplying the defects of nature, in raiſing the genius, and furniſhing the mind with new

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parated from the body, lie dormant, as ſome dreaming divines have idly imagined, till the day of the reſurrection.

new powers. Hence it is that men, who, at an early period of their lives, were of ſlow and unpromiſing parts, become, by dint of application, expert in buſineſs, and capable of managing the moſt weighty and important affairs with eaſe, ſedateneſs, and diſpatch.

Great is the folly of idle men; who, when every thing that is uſeful, ornamental, and valuable; every thing that is great and illuſtrious, may be purchaſed by induſtry, will ſink into negligence and ſtupidity, and cheat themſelves into a perſuaſion of their incapacity, when they want only an active reſolution to acquire thoſe qualifications which they envy in others, and for the defect of which, they muſt, upon reflection, know themſelves to be objects of contempt.

The moſt ſolid and uſeful knowledge is attained by ſlow, and ſometimes, almoſt imperceptible ſteps; which, if regularly and conſtantly purſued, would carry a man to the height of ſcience.

None

None of the illuſtrious characters of antiquity, none of the worthies we read of, ever gained their glory without toil and difficulty; for eminence was never the reward of indolence, and if we would acquire reputation or honour in the world, we muſt do it at the expence of labour. But it is ſuch a kind of labour, as to a generous mind, is amply rewarded by the mere pleaſure of the purſuit.

How unnatural, how unreaſonable then is idleneſs, and how deſirable a virtue is induſtry? The indolent man acts againſt his nature, his intereſt, and his duty. Vice can hardly inſinuate itſelf into the mind of the buſy and induſtrious, but that of the negligent and ſlothful is entirely unguarded: temptations find an eaſy entrance, and the whole ſoul becomes ſoftened and enfeebled: there is no virtue which idleneſs cannot deſtroy, or which cannot be acquired and improved by induſtry.

Inactivity and indolence are no leſs pernicious to our bodies than to our ſouls. How many and how dreadful diſeaſes do they produce? How many excellent conſtitutions do they deſtroy? The induſtrious and active are generally ſtrangers to the racking pains of the gout, the inconceivable tortures of the ſtone, and that ridiculous and terrible train of imaginary diſeaſes ariſing from the ſpleen.

Beſides, we ſee and know, by abundant experience, that induſtry is the only natural method of thriving, and that the moſt diligent are the moſt virtuous, and conſequently the moſt happy; and acquit themſelves with the greateſt propriety in every ſocial relation.

As the advantages of an active, and the diſadvantages of an inactive life are ſo many, well does the wiſe man, ſpeaking of the ſluggard, expreſs himſelf with contempt and indignation; bidding him *go to the Ant for inſtruc-*

inſtruction, to conſider her ways and be wiſe; propoſing one of the minuteſt inſects to him as a pattern of induſtry and wiſdom.

I proceed now to the ſecond particular, which was to ſhew the extent of induſtry as it regards all orders and degrees of mankind.

As I ſignified before; every man that comes into the world is obliged, both by duty and intereſt, to contribute all he can to the advantage of the community of which he is a member. This obligation extends through every rank and condition of men, and it is enjoyned us by no leſs an authority than that of God himſelf; who, when he expelled the firſt man from paradiſe, doomed him to eat his bread *in the ſweat of his brow*, and in him all his poſterity: and notwithſtanding the difference in fortune, titles, or honour, among mankind, no one can be ſaid to be exempt from it.

The pomp of royalty, the ſplendor of a court, the train of attendants, and the ready obedience paid to the King's will, ſeem to ſpeak him the happieſt of men, and that he has little to do with labour. But if we conſider how many great and eminent qualities go to forming and finiſhing the character of a Prince, what pains he goes through in the courſe of his education, in order to acquire them, what vigilance and care are required for the maintenance, proſperity, and defence of his dominions; and what tedious forms and ceremonies of ſtate he is forced to ſubmit to, we ſhall then conclude, that all thoſe appearances which flaſh ſo brightly in vulgar eyes, are purchaſed at the expence of inceſſant labour and anxiety; that a King is, in effect, his people's ſlave; and that ſubjection is, comparatively, a ſtate of freedom.

And how anxious, how very laborious is the life of the ſtateſman? His buſineſs is to weigh

weigh the intereſts of various nations; to be always upon the watch for intelligence, both at home and abroad; to pry into the counſels of his enemies; and to rack his invention to baffle and confound their contrivances. He has the honour and advantage of the King his maſter, the proſperity of the people, and the ſafety of himſelf to provide for: ſo that betwixt the burden of ſtate affairs, and the guarding againſt open or inſidious factions, his life is an uninterrupted courſe of toil, difficulty, and danger; and that diſtinction and grandeur which attend his office are purchaſed at the expence of the greateſt pains and induſtry.

Indeed every calling that claims any degree of reputation and honour among men, requires ſuch qualities to the due diſcharge of it as are attainable only by diligent application.

A man cannot acquit himſelf of the duty he owes to God, his neighbour, or himſelf, be his ſtation in the world what it will,

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by a careleſs and negligent life. True merit is the foundation of dignity, reſpect, and veneration; and theſe can, in no inſtance, belong to the ſlothful.

The gentleman who lives independent of any profeſſion, who poſſeſſes a fortune which is the entire acquiſition of his anceſtors, muſt not think that he came into the world to be an idle ſpectator, or what is much worſe, to have no regard to any thing but pleaſure and diſſipation. No; he has a part to act in the ſight of mankind: every eye is turned upon him to obſerve his virtues or mark his vices. He has various refinements and ornamental qualities to attain, to diſtinguiſh himſelf from the vulgar; to be a ſhining example to thoſe who are beneath him, and to gain the eſteem of ſuch as are above him; to acquire ſeveral virtues which are eſſential to his character; particularly generoſity, courteſy, and humility; to know the right uſe of wealth and power, and how to ſuit his behaviour to the different ranks of mankind; and by a juſt and well adapt-

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ed complaiſance to accommodate himſelf to their ſeveral diſpoſitions: and above all, to know that great ſecret, which is too little known, how to maintain at once the character of the gentleman and the chriſtian.

In ſhort, there are ſo many qualifications requiſite to form a gentleman, in order to a general reputation, that, though he be called to no employment in the church or ſtate, he will find no ſmall work upon his hands to acquire and maintain the character of an honeſt, generous, and worthy man.

Thus we ſee that induſtry is the law of God and nature; and that it is attended with innumerable advantages both to our bodies and ſouls; and that no order of men is exempt from the obligation to it; that it is the moſt natural and ready way to gain credit, riches, and honour; and in a word, is the moſt neceſſary virtue in the world, as it is evidently the ſource of every kind of merit.

I come

I come now to make two or three reflections upon what has been delivered.

Firſt, Induſtry concerns us all as we are men.

God has given man a ſuperior rank in the creation, and has dignified him with the divine principle of reaſon, having made him a little lower than the angels, and ſubjected every thing in this world to his command. He has given him talents capable of perpetual improvement, and the power of attaining ſuch virtues as will be uſeful and ornamental to himſelf, redound to the honour of his creator, and enſure his everlaſting peace and happineſs. It is then highly incumbent on him, if he has any regard for the improvement of his mind, or the tranquillity of his ſoul, to employ himſelf with

with unwearied application in the attainment of thoſe qualifications which he ought to acquire, as a rational creature. He ſhould ſtrive daily to grow more and more in wiſdom, by increaſing his knowledge, refining his judgment, correcting his paſſions, and applying them to their proper uſes. He ſhould conſider with himſelf the end and tendency of every action, and ſquare his whole conduct by the rule of pure and unbiaſſed reaſon. He ought to know in what the frailty and perfection of his nature conſiſt, and induſtriouſly avoid the one, and purſue the other; and in all things to act as the moſt perfect creature in the *viſible* creation of the all-perfect creator.

We ought alſo to be watchful and induſtrious, as we are chriſtians.

We muſt remember that the kingdom of heaven is gained by force, that the chri-

ſtian life is a ſpiritual warfare; and that we fight againſt principalities and powers: that there is no virtue which has not its contrary vice, and that moſt of thoſe vices are attended with many and powerful temptations. Error and falſe reaſoning are apt to oppoſe our faith; doubt and deſpair, our hope; and pride, envy, or ill-nature, to attack our charity. What pains muſt we take to ſubdue and mortify our luſts, to *cut off our right hands, and pluck out our right eyes?* Sin acts on the ſide of our corrupt nature, and has often deluding pleaſure for its advocate; ſo that we muſt act againſt the bent of our own minds, and ſwim againſt the ſtream of inclination. What powerful conflicts muſt we feel within ourſelves, in breaking off inveterate habits, and in renouncing our darling ſins; ſo as to perfect our repentance, and inſure our reformation.

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The chriſtian muſt combat with afflictions, be reſigned under tribulation, ſubmit himſelf patiently to the chaſtening of the Lord, and work out his ſalvation with fear and trembling.

Thus we ſee, that in fighting our good fight, in triumphing over the world, we muſt look for labour and difficulty. The kingdom of heaven is not to be acquired for nothing: the moment we live here we muſt endure affliction, but the reward will be an exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Is not heaven then worth our pains, nor eternal happineſs worth ſtriving for? If any thing be worth our purſuit, this certainly is; and there are the ſtrongeſt reaſons to excite and quicken our induſtry, *the greatneſs and certainty of the reward.*

The laſt thing I ſhall mention is the pleaſure which the mind enjoys upon the conſideration of having made a right improvement of our time, and duly diſcharged our duty.

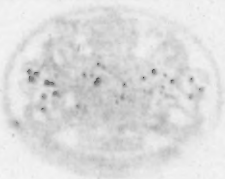
Surely no happineſs is greater than this. How ſincere and elevated a pleaſure is it to take a ſurvey of our own ſouls, and ſee them adorned with all the virtues and graces which compoſe the character of a perfect chriſtian; to conſider that we have neglected no opportunity of being uſeful to our fellow creatures, obedient to the laws, or ſerviceable to ourſelves; to ſee the end of all our labours accompliſhed in the attainment of that religious perfection from the height of which we may ſecurely look down upon all the vices and follies of mankind; to ſee ourſelves above the reach of temptations, regardleſs

of

of the little turns of fortune, and unruffled by any worldly diſappointments, through a conſcious and well grounded virtue? This, ſurely, is to be happy, if there is any happineſs upon earth; to reflect with approbation upon a well ſpent life, and to ſee all our labours ſucceeded by a calmneſs and ſedateneſs of ſoul which nothing but a good conſcience can beſtow. Then ſhall we find our hope increaſe as our diſſolution approaches; ſo that we ſhall not ſhrink from death in all its terrors. Then religion ſhall ſpeak peace to our ſouls, and compoſe us in the midſt of pain and agony. In a word, it will take out the ſting of death, and give us peace at the laſt.

Let us then employ our induſtry to the beſt purpoſe; ſeriouſly ſet about the work of the Lord, and enter, with reſolution, upon our chriſtian warfare; determined

mined to fight againſt our ſpiritual enemies, and conquer temptations: then ſhall we die the Death of the righteous, and our laſt end ſhall be like his.—That this may be the happy portion of us all, may God of his infinite mercy grant, for Jeſus Chriſt's Sake.

Now to God, &c.

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